

"Our Duty to Obey and Submit."

nothing at variance with their duty when they strenuously and constantly labour to preserve and maintain it. Nay, even magistrates ought to do their utmost to prevent the liberty, of which they have been appointed guardians, from being impaired, far less violated. If in this they are sluggish or little careful, they are perfidious traitors to their office and their country/'

He dislikes political agitation, however, and is evidently no believer in political progress. He treats politics, Bible in hand, as a theologian, not as a philosopher, an independent thinker. He is in his own way as much the slave of a theological theory as the schoolmen. "Should those to whom the Lord has assigned one form of government take it upon them anxiously to look for a change, the wish would not only be foolish and superfluous, but very pernicious. . . . For if it has pleased Him to appoint kings over kingdoms, and senates or burgomasters over free States, whatever be the form which He has appointed in the places in which we live, our duty is to obey and submit."

The office of magistrates being divinely instituted, it follows from Calvin's point of view that one of their principal functions is "to take care that religion flourishes under them in purity and safety." What folly are those guilty of, therefore, who contend that the magistrate should concern himself merely with the administration of law. "Such views are adopted by turbulent men, who, in their eagerness to make all kinds of innovations with impunity, would fain get rid of all the vindicators of violated piety." In Calvin's eyes the secular and the spiritual, though distinct, are closely connected, and practically he is the champion of a theocracy in the interest of the Church. The duty of the magistrate to maintain the law of God, as well as the law of the land, leads him, moreover, to propound some dangerous maxims from the standpoint of liberty of conscience. If he is persuaded that the authority of God is at stake, he will not swerve from using the strong arm of the law to maintain it. Moses slaying three thousand of his countrymen in one day for sacrilege is only executing the divine judgment. "How is it that the meek and gentle temper of Moses becomes so exasperated that, besmeared and reeking with the blood of his brethren, he runs through the